Washington Merry-Go-Round

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Cuban Says CIA Proposed Lie About Oswald

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with
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Washington — The Central Intelligence Agency asked one of its Cuban operatives to help fabricate a story about Lee Harvey Oswald during the investigation of the John F. Kennedy assassination, the Cuban has told congressional investigators.

The same witness, whom we will call Mr. X, claimed he had met the accused assassin in Dallas in the company of a CIA agent three months before Kennedy was killed.

Congressional investigators interviewed him three times, cross-examining him closely. They concluded he was a credible witness.

HE TOLD OF MEETING his CIA contact in the lobby of a Dallas office building in August 1963. "This time he brought another guy," recounted Mr. X. "The guy never talked."

Mr. X explained that he had trained himself, as an underground leader, to memorize the characteristics of people he met. He immediately recognized the CIA agent's companion after seeing Oswald on television following the Kennedy assassination.

Not long afterward, the CIA contact made a strange request of Mr. X.

There had been a report that Oswald had met a Cuban couple in Mexico. "You have a cousin working for Cuban intelligence in Mexico," the CIA agent said. "Why don't you just ask him, saying we'll bribe him, if he said it was really him that Oswald met."

IT ISN'T CLEAR from the confidential transcripts why the CIA would want to fabricate this evidence. Perhaps the CIA could have sought to tie Kennedy's killer to the Castro government.

In any event, the CIA agent called off the scheme, and Mr. X "never did talk to his cousin," according to a summary of the interview. It should be stressed that the interview in no way implicates the CIA in the Kennedy killing.

The mystery witness first met his CIA contact in Havana before the United States broke off relations with Cuba. Mr. X had helped to organize a group of bank accountants who embezzled funds from the Castro regime to finance anti-Castro causes.

The agent, who used the name Morris Bishop, recruited Mr. X to plan an attempt on Castro's life. The plotters planned to fire a bazooka from a nearby apartment while Castro was delivering one of his marathon speeches.

The plot was discovered by Castro's police, and Mr. X escaped to Miami. He continued for a dozen more years to work with Bishop in the anti-Castro underground.

DURING CASTRO'S 1971 visit to Chile, Mr. X tried again to knock him off. The plotters included a Venezuelan security agent, named Louis Posado Carriles, who was supposed to provide forged documents laying the blame on the Soviets. This plot, too, fell through.

Only a few weeks ago the same Posada was indicted in Venezuela on muder charges in connection with the crash of a Cuban jetliner.

Mr. X said he worked for the CIA until 1973 for expenses. When the relationship was terminated in 1973, he said, Morris Bishop paid him $253,000 in cash for past services.